

**Utah Asthma Task Force
Meeting Minutes—October 6, 2009
Utah Department of Health, Room 125***

Welcome—Rebecca Giles, Program Manager

Rebecca announced that the Asthma Program has received funding for another five years from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Community mini grants will continue as they have in the past, but in addition, two local health departments are being funded to create their own local asthma plan, conduct a needs assessment, develop a coalition, and conduct intervention activities. The funded mini grant community organizations are Centro Hispano, and Alliance Community. The two local health departments that have been funded are Utah County Health Department and Central Utah Public Health Department.

Volunteers are needed to help develop a sustainability plan for the Utah Asthma Task Force, which will include discussion on how to raise awareness of the Task Force and how to draw attention to policy makers so that in the long term, the Task Force is recognized for what it has done and for what it will be doing. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that Task Force partnerships and activities continue to grow and be sustainable over time. Only 3-4 meetings will be held during a 6 month time period. Please contact Ali Martin (alimartin@utah.gov) or Rebecca Giles (rgiles@utah.gov) for information on how to participate.

“Living with Asthma: A Mother’s Perspective”—Andrea Jensen

Andrea spoke about the difficulties that come from having several children with asthma, and what their family has done to deal with their chronic illness. Her children were “cursed” with genetics as she and her husband have asthma and allergies, and a total of 14 hospital visits have been made between her three children. She has learned that each of her children has a unique type of asthma triggers, and unique responses to medications. Triggers have been hard to learn about, but in her mind have been classified in two categories—uncontrollable ones (bad air quality days, cold weather, smoke from forest fires, etc.), and those that can be dealt with successfully (exterior of house and plants that can be planted or removed, indoor issues—washing sheets frequently, removing shoes inside the house, removing dust in curtains and under the bed, central cooling and heating, etc.). In her experience, the best thing you can do with asthma is to be prepared, as you never know when an unexpected attack will come. She suggests two main things that will help with asthma: know the jargon, as doctors will take you more seriously, and know your personal numbers for peak flow, just like a diabetic needs to know their numbers.

Discussion on the Priorities

The action groups presented their group’s priorities for the coming year and discussed why each priority was chosen. The groups that presented were: Risk Factors (Ali Martin, Asthma Program staff support), Population Issues (Lynette Hansen, Altius and new chair for the group), and Asthma Management and Health Systems (Rebecca Jorgensen, Asthma Program staff support). Meeting participants voted upon the priorities. The final priorities will be sent out via the asthma listserv and will be available on the Asthma Program website (www.health.utah.gov/asthma).

* Special thanks to Einstein’s Bagels for the donations.